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Satiation, Habituation, and Elasticity: An Economic Analysis

Amanda Zang

Illinois Wesleyan University

James Dougan, Faculty Advisor

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Oral Presentation O2.2

SATIATION, HABITUATION, AND ELASTICITY: AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Amanda Zang and James Dougan*

Psychology Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

Response rates typically change systematically within operant conditioning sessions. Proposed explanations for this phenomenon include habituation and satiation. The present study investigated these explanations. Six Sprague-Dawley rats were exposed to a series of variable interval (VI) schedules. Each schedule consisted of a baseline, same pre-feed, and different pre-feed condition. During the same pre-feed, the rats received the same food as was earned during the session, whereas in the different pre-feed, the rats received a food that differed from that earned during the session. A larger decrease in responding during a same food pre-feed condition would support habituation as the explanation. As predicted, there were greater decreases in responding in the same pre-feed conditions. These effects were seen at the higher VI schedules. The results support habituation theory and replicate earlier results from our lab. This research has implications for both habituation and satiation theories as well as eating disorders.